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RUEHBW/AMEMBASSY BELGRADE PRIORITY 0321
RUEHRL/AMEMBASSY BERLIN PRIORITY 1772
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RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY 4356
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY 2284
RUEHFL/AMCONSUL FLORENCE PRIORITY 2465
RUEHMIL/AMCONSUL MILAN PRIORITY 8749
RUEHNP/AMCONSUL NAPLES PRIORITY 2626
RUEHPS/USOFFICE PRISTINA PRIORITY 0404
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 0766
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 001333

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [UNSC](#) [SR](#) [YI](#) [IT](#)
SUBJECT: KOSOVO: ITALIANS NOT READY TO DISCUSS INDEPENDENCE
WITHOUT UNSC RESOLUTION

REF: A) BLACK-ESCOBAR EMAIL 6/15/07 B) ROME 1305

ROME 00001333 001.2 OF 002

Classified By: Classified by David D. Pearce, Acting Deputy Chief of Mission, for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

Summary
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1. (C/NF) FM D'Alema is convinced of the need to exhaust every means possible to reach consensus on a resolution even if it meant a 120-180 day delay. The Italian MFA, therefore, will not engage at this point on discussions related to a unilateral declaration of independence by Kosovo absent a resolution, even on a theoretical basis. Raimondo De Cardona, Head of the Italian MFA Balkans Office, underlined the sensitivity of this issue by telling poloffs that moving ahead without a UNSC resolution risked splitting the EU, destroying Italy's bipartisan support for Rome's Kosovo mission, creating greater instability in the Balkans and even endangering Italy's participation in KFOR. His statements track closely with D'Alema's comments to Deputy Secretary Negroponte on June 9 (ref b). De Cardona said that

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D'Alema was convinced after his June 14-15 visit to Belgrade and Pristina that Kostunica had begun to think about options to allow his government to save face. He also believed the Kosovar Albanians would be prepared to wait a few more months in order to settle Kosovo's status issue. End Summary.

2. (C/NF) On June 16, poloffs delivered ref a points on possible alternatives for moving forward on Kosovo's independence without a UNSC resolution. Normally open to sharing his personal thoughts, De Cardona told poloffs, "I am not authorized to discuss this." De Cardona noted that he would not engage on this topic at the Quint meeting in Sarajevo on June 19. He added that he had just spent 24 hours with D'Alema and noted that the FM preferred to exhaust all possibilities on getting support for a resolution before any discussions - regardless of how theoretical - on moving ahead without one. Without a resolution, Italy was convinced the EU would split on its decision to recognize Kosovo,

Italy's bipartisan support of the MFA's Kosovo policy would be shattered, and the GOI might have trouble getting support from the Italian parliament for continuing its 2,000-plus KFOR participation. De Cardona also noted that any follow-on ESDP (European Security and Defense Policy) mission would not be legitimate without a UN resolution, adding that the EU must tread carefully because Kosovo will be a crucial test for ESDP.

¶3. (C/NF) During D'Alema's visit to Belgrade, Kostunica remarked that although Serbia continued to reject any solution that would give Kosovo independence, he added that he was confident that the international community could find a solution acceptable to both Belgrade and Pristina. "The international community has always been able to find good solutions to difficult problems in the Balkans," Kostunica told D'Alema. Kostunica's advisor and Kosovo negotiator Samardzic noted that Dayton and Okhrid had been very good solutions to seemingly intractable ethnic conflicts - perhaps something similar could be devised for Kosovo. De Cardona noted that Italy was open to discussing non-status portions of the Ahtisaari plan, particularly if it could bring Belgrade closer to accepting supervised independence. He also suggested disconnecting elements of the plan from Ahtisaari's name could ease acceptance, noting, "Ahtisaari did a good job, but he could have done more. Maybe if the plan had a different name.."

¶4. (C/NF) De Cardona stated that the GOI was supportive of a 120-180 day delay on Kosovo. D'Alema was convinced during his visit to Pristina that the Kosovar Albanians could wait a bit more if it meant finding a proper solution to their status issue. Poloff noted that the longer the international community asked the Kosovar leadership to wait, the less leverage and influence we could expect to have. We could not have an open-ended process. De Cardona agreed, but added that the delay could also serve to show the rest of the international community that we had done everything possible

ROME 00001333 002.2 OF 002

to secure a resolution.

¶5. (C/NF) Comment. Italy still stands by its policy of supporting supervised independence and FM D'Alema has been consistent in supporting the Ahtisaari proposal - although he is not as firm on the non-status questions. Italy is concerned about how to get there, however, and about how the international community will deal with the aftermath. For Italy, a unilateral declaration of Kosovo's independence without the UN, without EU consensus, and with domestic political opposition is a nightmare scenario. D'Alema believes moving forward outside of the UN structure would be politically dangerous for the Balkans, for the international community, and - because moving without the international consensus would be politically divisive - dangerous for his weak government as well.
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